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SUBJECT: EU FMS AT NOV. 2 GAERC AGREE SUPPORT
MEASURES FOR IRAQ, KEEP PRESSURE ON SUDAN

REF: (A) USEU BRUSSELS 4665; (B) COPENHAGEN 1920

SUMMARY

1. (SBU) EU FMs on November 2 agreed a package of measures to support Iraq ahead of a November 5 visit by PM Allawi. They confirmed EU financial support for the electoral process and decided to send an expert team by the end of November "to start planning" with the Iraqi authorities "for a possible integrated police, rule of law and civilian administration mission" that would only deploy in-country after the January elections. FMs noted the "deteriorating" security situation in Darfur and reiterated that the EU "does not exclude the use of sanctions." Solana also presented his strategy for a relaunch of the Middle East road map and continued reform of the PA. Iran was not on the GAERC agenda (it will be discussed by EU FMs on November 4), but Solana said discussions were "progressively more constructive" and the EU "has not lost hope." END SUMMARY.

2. (SBU) EU Foreign Ministers met in a General Affairs and External Relations Council session primarily devoted to preparing the November 4-5 European Council (EU Summit). A Council source who attended almost all of the event said it was a "very low-key" affair. Full Conclusions from the GAERC are available on the consilium.eu.int website. Despite REF B indications, China was not raised in the formal GAERC session.

IRAQ

3. (SBU) The Conclusions are much as we anticipated (REF A), with as forward leaning a text as the Member States could agree. The EU is trying to do all it can to demonstrate its engagement on Iraq, particularly in advance of PM Allawi's visit the end of this week to the European Council. The only real point at issue was a suggestion by France, which was not accepted, to tone down the warmth of the language about Allawi, after his critical comments over the weekend. A further declaration in addition to today's Conclusions will be issued at the Summit, but a Council source told us it will be "a very similar package, as we won't have much more to say then". Some Member States had argued the EU should have held all the Iraq language for the Summit. Key points from the Iraq Conclusions are:

- EU "could usefully contribute" an "integrated police, rule of law and civilian administration mission." "While judging that activities outside Iraq with a presence of liaison elements in Iraq would be feasible at this point in time, the Council agreed that with regard to a mission inside Iraq all security concerns need to be appropriately addressed before any decision by the Council could be taken." Much later in the text, the GAERC says an "expert team" should go by the end of November to start planning with the Iraqi authorities for this mission, "which is expected to start after the January 2005 elections". (NOTE: Two sources involved in the GAERC could not interpret this text for us, on whether activities outside Iraq could begin earlier, while any in-country mission would have to be after the elections. One contact said the Conclusions on Iraq had been "subject to much to'ing and fro'ing last week". Another contact said the GAERC had to be "intentionally vague" about the timing of any mission in this text. This language does not/not necessarily mean the EU would begin such an integrated mission now, and then consider later moving it in-country. It appears a further decision is needed to green light any mission beyond the expert team. END NOTE)

- GAERC agreed to give Iraq "the perspective of an

agreement...to promote political and trade cooperation" and asked the Commission to start on assistance programs "aimed at developing the conditions for such an agreement". GAERC invited Commission to "enhance as appropriate and with due regard to security its presence in Baghdad."

- Affirmed 230 million in Community assistance to the elections cluster of IRFFI, as well as intention to provide experts and training.
- Reaffirms that Member States "are ready to contribute substantially to the financing of the middle ring of the UN Protection Force" and notes the Commission is "still discussing with the UN a possible financial contribution of the Community to the inner ring."

- Noted Iraq is an EU GSP beneficiary and said "as soon as conditions allow", the Commission should work with the Iraqi administration to get the system operating. GAERC also "agreed to continue efforts of the Member States to exchange views on debt."

SUDAN

14. (SBU) GAERC issued very familiar language with nothing that strikes us as particularly new. Key points:

- GAERC "notes with grave concern that the security situation in parts of Darfur has been deteriorating in the last weeks." Repeats that the EU "does not exclude the use of sanctions."

- EU details its readiness to support the African Union's monitoring mission (AMIS), with Council-level agreement on 280 million from the Africa Peace Facility, as well as three references to the EU's interest in providing the AU advice or expertise, "if requested."

MEPP

15. (SBU) High Rep Solana presented his ideas on an "action plan" for implementation of the road map, as well as some thoughts on European parameters for eventual talks on final status. A paper outlining these ideas was circulated to EU FMs last Friday. Our contact said EU envoy Marc Otte and A/S Burns had talked over the weekend, so the USG should already have a very clear idea of Solana's approach. The Solana paper would probably be circulated to Quartet partners soon.

IRAN

16. (SBU) Iran was dropped from the agenda for this GAERC. It will be taken up at the EU FMs' dinner on Nov. 4, with possible Summit Conclusions on Nov. 5. In response to a question at the press conference, Solana said EU-Iran contacts were on-going, with the discussions "progressively more constructive", but if they were to be raised to the highest level, then a "breakthrough" was still needed. "We have not lost hope," he added. In a separate press conference, French FM Barnier said the EU was looking for a "durable, lasting commitment" by Iran in exchange for a "true, interesting contract" from the EU.

RUSSIA

17. (SBU) In general, EU FMs agreed the EU should hold a firm line regarding what it would offer for the Nov. 11 EU-Russia Summit, although France and Italy in particular noted that the EU should also take note of recent positive steps (from the EU perspective) by Russia such as ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and extension of the EU-Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement to the 10 new EU members. With the media, Bot did mention these steps, but also stressed the EU would insist the four proposed EU-Russia "spaces" were a coherent package that is indivisible, and that the EU was prepared to accept that it might not reach agreement with Russia on the whole package at next week's Summit. (One source said this was a noticeably "firmer line than Bot took 10 days ago" in the EU-Russia ministerial meeting, after which Bot had taken some criticism from other member states over being too soft.)

BELARUS

18. (SBU) Polish FM raised concerns about recent developments, and suggested the European Council Conclusions on Nov. 5 should include a paragraph on Belarus. The Dutch Presidency resisted adding any topics to the Summit. But several other Member States (Denmark, Finland, Balts) agreed the situation is of concern, and that the EU needed to take a strong line, though more through engagement than isolation.

OTHER AFRICA

19. (U) Individual member states gave interventions on issues of predictable national concern -- Somalia (Italy), Congo (Belgium) and Guinea-Bissau (Portugal) -- but failed to spark any real discussion.

ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION

10. (U) Dutch European Affairs Minister Atzo Nicolai reported progress on outstanding issues in the EU's next multi-annual JHA program. He forecast that the European Council would agree to extend qualified majority voting (QMV) to all asylum and migration issues, other than rules on legal migration (including such issues as procedures on issuance of work permits). Austria, Greece, Slovakia and Estonia voiced concerns about extending QMV to this final area. (NOTE: Under the current treaties, EU Member States, acting unanimously, can agree to move these issues to QMV from the current consensus requirement.) Nicolai also reported that 2010 should remain the EU's deadline for establishing a Common Asylum System.
SCHNABEL